

Microlepidoptera of Middlesex

Following on from the success of the recent publication *Larger moths of the London Area* (1993), the London Natural History Society is now working towards publication of a checklist of the microlepidoptera of Middlesex. It is expected that the exercise may take another four years to complete.

The term Middlesex involves the entire of vice-county 21 and thus includes all of the London boroughs north of the River Thames with the exception of the five lying to the east of the River Lea (Newham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Barking & Dagenham and Havering), which are in South Essex (VC18). Middlesex also incorporates some areas which lie in the current administrative county of Hertfordshire, notably the Potters Bar area. No part of Middlesex extends south of the River Thames.

Records are sought from appropriate persons for all those families generally regarded as "micros" – thus including the Psychidae which were formerly referred to as the "macros", as well as those which are sometimes referred to as the mesolepidoptera – the Tortricidae, Alucitidae, Pyralidae and Pterophoridae. Records should include the name, the Bradley & Fletcher code number (to avoid nomenclature confusion), the date where possible and the locality. Records will be assumed to relate to imagines unless "mine", "larva" or some other qualifying statement is provided. Localities will ideally include a place name and a four figure grid reference. Place names should be those appearing on the Ordnance Survey maps; precise localities, such as the names of nature areas or ecology parks in London are desirable but if these do not appear on the O.S. maps the nearest locality should always be given. Where a grid reference cannot be obtained, an address obtained from one of the various published books of street maps of London should be used. Site lists will ideally be presented in Log Book order to facilitate data entry. Overnight trap dates should give the first date, according to the example 23 August for 23-24 August, and not as 24 August. Approximate counts and sexes are desirable for immigrants. Confidentiality for selected records may be requested. Records are required for all time, not just the present. I regret that because of other commitments, I am unable to accept specimens for identification.

All communications will be acknowledged and records from outside Middlesex contained in mixed lists will always be forwarded to the appropriate recorders unless directions are given to the contrary. Because of the risk posed by computer viruses I am not prepared to accept records on disk; unsolicited disks will be returned un-examined. Please send records direct to me.— COLIN W. PLANT, 14 West Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3QP.

***Metoecus paradoxus* (L.) (Col.: Rhipiphoridae): further West Kent records**

Recently my friend Michael Chalmers-Hunt kindly passed to me a male of the wasp-nest beetle, found a flower in his garden at West Wickham on 5 August 1995. Fowler (1891, *Coleoptera of the British Isles*. 5: 83) remarks

that it is rarely found on flowers, which certainly seems true, though the sporadic examples met with at large can occur under almost any circumstances. About eight years ago my late friend Dudley Collins, at Carshalton Beeches, Surrey, saw a passing bird drop something on his garden lawn, which proved to be a male *Metoecus* (unsurprisingly rather damaged).

It is becoming steadily more apparent that *M. paradoxus* is spread over all of England and may occur wherever its hosts do. The West Wickham find is but one of the latest of a crop of records from around London; it is curious, therefore, that neither in Fowler (*loc. cit.*) nor in Folwer & Donisthorpe (1913, *op. cit.* 6: 299) is there a record for the London district, except perhaps Coombe Wood (Wimbledon?). I can add another from West Kent: Welling, a male and female from a wasp-nest in an attic, found dead in sealed cells, also a pupa, mid-November (K.C. Lewis). The last is another case of the occurrence of the species in an above-ground nest (*cf.* Allen, 1984, *Ent. Rec.* 96: 184), of which several are now known; the common idea that it breeds only in underground nests is emphatically no longer tenable.

– A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

The Horseflies of Yorkshire by Andrew Grayson. 48 pages. ANDYG Publications. £3.00 (including postage and packing; overseas £4.00 surface, £5.00 airmail). 1995.

This is a comprehensive account of the eleven species of Tabanidae confirmed to occur in the historic county of Yorkshire. Of these only two *Chrysops* and two *Haematopota* are considered to be well-established in the county today. The other species are rather more local and a few of them may now be extinct in the county. Surprisingly, *Tabanus bromius* Linnaeus, among the commoner members of its family elsewhere, could not be confirmed as having occurred in Yorkshire.

The habits and habitats are described in general and by species and the present distribution of suitable habitats in Yorkshire is discussed. A full list of available data including evaluation of earlier records and of the sources of information are included. The distribution maps for each species are supported by a tabular display of distribution by vice-county and major geographical areas within Yorkshire.

The most attractive feature of this account is the whole-insect drawings of both sexes of all eleven species plus a representative of *Atylotus*, the only British genus not recorded in Yorkshire.

Notes on identification and simplified keys to the included species (illustrated by diagnostic features) conclude the work. Typographical errors are few but E.E. Austen's name is misspelt in both text and references.

This work is available from the author (cheques payable to him) at The Ryedale Laundry, Kirkbymoorside, York YO6 6DN. Peter Chandler